

# Art and Pugilism Meet in Pink Tea Ring; Adepts at Biff and Bang Qualify as Critics

Men Who Have Made Their Reputations in the Marquis of Queensberry Game Consent to Give Their Professional Opinions of the Work of an Artist Who Strove to Portray the Fine Points of Their Profession, and Result Is an Interesting Afternoon for All Concerned



By Torrey Ford

TEA fights and prizefights have few points of similarity. For the moment we are rather stumped to name one individual instance where the two forms of recreation overlap. But it doesn't matter. We have seen a prizefighter at a tea party and that's enough.

What's more, we have seen Jimmy De Forest, the trainer who groomed Jack Dempsey for the Toledo blow-out, chaperoning a bunch of his fellow pugilists through several rounds of a regulation studio art-tea-and-music afternoon. With our own eyes we have witnessed the unusual spectacle of a positively prominent light-heavy ex-champ explaining across the tea table to a pretty little bobbed-haired miss the difference between a body jab and a hook to the jaw.

## Scene Worthy of History

We have seen all this and survive to set the matter down for posterity. As a chronicler of the historic scene we feel that we deserve some small niche in the Hall of Fame.

But the public is instinctively incredulous. We shall have to parade all the details in full view before we can hope to gain the confidence or faith of a single reader. And then only may we plunge recklessly in on the spectacular moments of the merry afternoon.

Miss Louise Vermont has a studio at 11 East Thirteenth Street. Miss Vermont is a delightful hostess and a gifted singer—very much of a regular person. Among her friends there are artists, writers, actresses, college professors and other professional folk. For one purpose and another she occasionally gathers these friends together.

Last week Miss Vermont sent out invitations to a private exhibition of the paintings of James Chapin, a young artist whose works have not as yet been presented to the public. Besides the art there was to be tea and music between 4 and 6. Friends and art critics were invited—and almost as an afterthought it was decided to include some pugilists.

## Their Place as Critics

Not that pugilists are regarded as expert balancers of tea cups on the knee; nor in the greater field of art does fame hang ponderously on their words of praise or condemnation, but there are circumstances where one pugilist at a tea is worth half a dozen fighters in the ring.

Among Chapin's paintings, it seems, there were four prizefight pictures—"The Knock-Out," "The Count," "The Attack" and "The Handers." While the critics were judging art values the pugilists might air their views on the technical perfection of the canvases—or so it was planned.

With this in mind, engraved invitations were sent out to Benny Leonard, Freddie Welsh, Jimmy De Forest, Tex Rickard, John the Barber, Bill Brennan—in fact, the very aristocracy of the fistle world.

On the gala day Jimmy De Forest was the first to arrive at the studio. "Sorry to be late, folks," said Jimmy as he dashed in the door at five minutes past 4, perspiration hanging to his brow. "I always like to keep my appointments on time. But the train was late comin' over from Philly and I couldn't make it any sooner."

## Why Welsh Was Late

Jimmy's tardiness was mild compared with that of Freddie Welsh. At a quarter past 6 Mr. Welsh had not put in an appearance. Over the phone he explained that he thought

all parties, even tea parties, began at 8 p. m. He had noticed the "4 to 6" on the invitation, but thought it must be a mistake. As a matter of fact, he was buttoning himself into his open-face clothes at the moment, preparing for the grand entrance. Other fighters were not so cautious nor so punctilious. They sifted in gradually, along with the regular studio patrons, and tried to puzzle out why they had been included. As soon as the word was passed around that nobody was expected to make a speech or stage a bout, or do anything but enjoy the party, the cauliflower ear aggregation made a few wild stabs at fading into the background. Which is a whole lot harder than



ONE of the ladies is being shown by Jimmy De Forest, Jack Dempsey's trainer, where the knock-out punch lands. She didn't in the least care even for Jimmie's gentle tap on her chin.

it sounds. Picture, if you can, a welterweight dropping softly on a low divan beside an elegantly gowned lady who persists in asking: "Oh, Mr. Prizefighter, don't you really think Chapin's horizon lines are too delicious?"

"What's de idea?" whispered one big husky to his pal. "What's de idea, anyhow?"

## The Puzzled Professor

And at the same moment we saw a history professor from New York University trying to determine definitely any possible reason for all the ceremony with which he was being presented to a man whose only claim to fame was that he had stayed twelve rounds with Jack Dempsey.

But Miss Vermont moved nimbly among her guests and reconciled differences with a wave of the arm or an encouraging smile.

"Come, tell us what you think of the fight pictures, Mr. De Forest," she urged.

And Mr. De Forest did, surrounded by a mixed group of persons whose interest in applied boxing was a complex of comparatively instantaneous development.

"Yeah," said Jimmy, "them pictures are all right. That's the very



JAMES CHAPIN, whose ring pictures attracted the fighters

MR. CHAPIN is a fight fan as well as an artist, and the four panels here reproduced are his interpretation of four striking moments in the ring. The one at the upper left is called, "The Attack"; next in order is "The Knock-Out," said by Jimmy De Forest to be the identical blow with which Dempsey first felled Willard. The remaining two are "The Handers" and "The Count."

"the wallop that brought the knock-out."

"What is a knock-out, Mr. De Forest?" asked a lady who thought every one ought to know a little about everything.

"It's the finish of the fight, lady."

"But why is it the finish?"

## On Her Pretty Chin

Jimmy tried to be patient and at the same time drive his point home.

"It's when you get soaked there," he said, reaching over and tapping his questioner on her embryo double chin, "so hard you can't get up to take any more."

"But I shouldn't like that at all," said the lady, who didn't even seem to care for Jimmy's mild tap.

"No, I don't suppose you would," confessed Jimmy in an intimate burst of confidence.

"How does it feel to be knocked out?"

Another woman had entered the field.

"It don't feel at all, lady. Just numb and useless and sort of discouraged."

For a few minutes it looked as

though Jimmy De Forest was going to carry the day alone. But the other pugilists, noting the enthusiasm for first-hand information on their trade, came out of their corners and mixed in freely with the ladies. With the artists, the poets

and the college professors backed

off the scene, the fighters had then stage to themselves.

Questions and answers flew about the place with unnatural speed.

Here a pug explained noisily to an excited audience of two what a tame sport "rassling" was; there another discoursed with equal can-



ONE of the guests demonstrating to a fair tea drinker the difference between a jab and a hook

dor on the vaudeville features of an "amachure" night. Off at one side a young lady who didn't look like that kind at all, was being urged to "hit 'em in the pit of the stomach and then lam 'em on the nose."

If the day was ever to be saved for art, some one had to make some quick motions.

We stepped up to an intelligent appearing pugilist and led him over to one of Chapin's portraits. It was a color study of a girl's head and shoulders.

"Well, what do you think of that?" we asked.

"She's got a wide chest," he said, and that was all we could get out of him.

We led another fighter up to a group of landscapes and waited for his comment. None came. We urged him a little.

"Like the fight pitchers better," he grunted.

"But don't you think those clouds are rather—rather nice?"

"Oh, them's clouds, eh?" The fighter broke away and fell into a

conversational clinch with a lady who was willing to let him direct the conversation himself.

## Tea at a Discount

When tea time came there arose a difficult situation that might have taken on an alarming aspect if wise provision had not been made. Not a prizefighter could be found who would confess to a preference for tea. Not even was there one who had a mild leaning toward the beverage.

"Coffee's my stimulant," said one. "Coffee for me," said another. "I'll take mine long and black," said a third.

Fortunately there was coffee,

without which no tea party for prizefighters could attempt success. And there were little iced cakes, thin sandwiches and pink candies.

"Don't overeat, boys," we heard Jimmy De Forest warn some of his friends.

It was in the tearoom that we saw the little bobbed-haired miss receive her preliminary instructions in safe and sane body punches, blow that could be delivered without dropping the guard.

She sat demurely behind a huge copper samovar, pouring tea and dropping in the sugar and lemon with the precision of a grand dame. Across the way on a lounge the ex-champ balanced his coffee cup on the left knee and tried to throw off a general air of being perfectly at home.

## Cave Man Stuff

We get official credit for the introduction, though by the look on the ex-champ's face it was only a matter of seconds before he would have been ready to waive all formalities.

"So you're a prizefighter?" she began.

"Yeah, and it's a great sport, take it from me," said the ex-champ.

"It must be thrilling!" she encouraged him.

"Worse than that, ma'am. And better, too. It's a sport for a real man."

"What is your favorite shot?" the girl asked.

"Shot?"

"Your favorite stroke. I don't know what you call it."

"Oh, you mean me prize punch. Well, I'll tell you, lady, as a general rule I favors the jab, but for the knockout I takes de hook. It's sure."

"But what is a jab and what is a hook?"

"I better explain to you right here. You might as well know now as later," said the ex-champ, parking his cup on the table and choking down the last of his iced cake.

"For a jab you throws your mitt out straight this way—see? You don't put no weight behind it, but lots of beef. For a hook you comes up this way with a twist. Now you do it."

## An Apt Pupil

And the young lady did, right across the tea table, without disturbing a cup or jarring a plate.

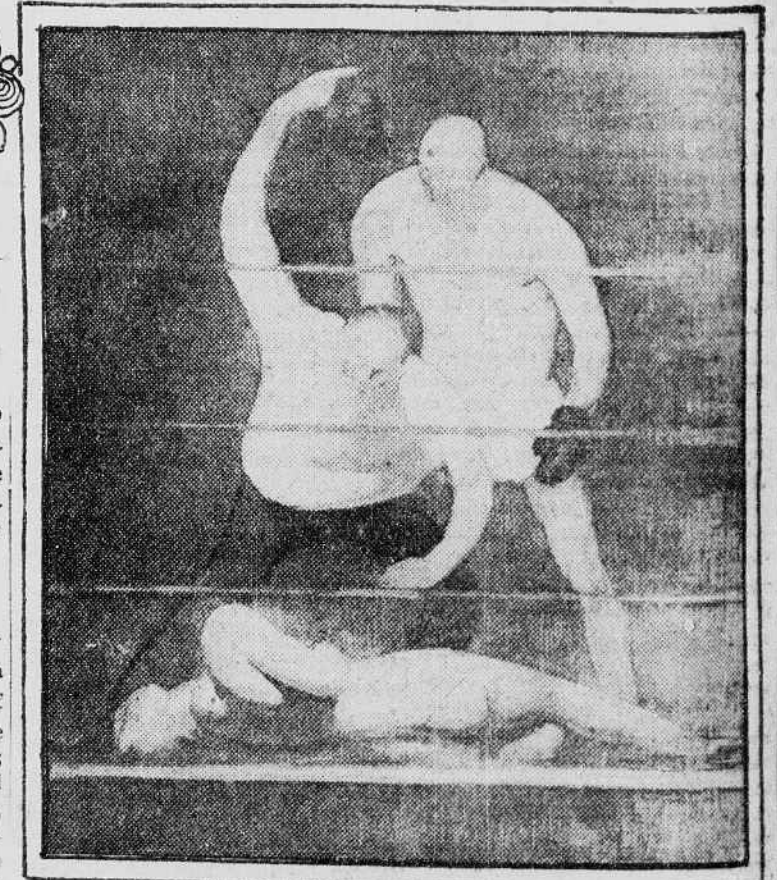
"Ah, you broke your knuckle on that one," warned the ex-champ. "Keep your thumb inside, and swing wide."

If it hadn't held up service at the tea table so completely the bobbed-haired miss might have taken a full lesson in body punches; but she had to go on and pour tea.

For the musical interlude we squeezed in on a sofa between two staid gentlemen. During the rendering of "Deep River" both of them sat with rapt expressions, digits hanging from their jaws.

"I'll say she can sing all right," said one, "but can she dance?"

Quite by force of habit we took



out a cigarette and started to light it, when some one whispered in our ear:

"Say, there's free ones up on the mantle."

At 6:30 we left the party. None of the prizefighters had made a move. They were having too good a time. It wasn't every day in the year that they got invited out to be art critics, and they intended to make it last as long as the law would allow.

"But, gee," one of the fighters is reported to have said as he started down the stairs, "the eats wasn't much, was they?"

## Lord Robert Cecil a Retiring Leader

POLITICAL experts disagree as to the future of Lord Robert Cecil. He is one of the most interesting figures in British life today.

Interesting in personal appearance, interesting in his attitude toward life, interesting as a political leader, Lord Robert is watched by thousands to-day.

Tall almost as Carson, he is not an imposing figure as he stands in Parliament or on the public platform. Rather careless in his dress, shoulders slightly rounded, he seems timid, bashful, retiring. Of noble ancestry, he comes of a family which has long influenced English political life. He is the son of the Marquis of Salisbury, Prime Minister of England, and cousin of Arthur J. Balfour, another Prime Minister. His university education was obtained at Oxford. Born and bred a Conservative, he is one of the most liberal of present-day statesmen.

Not far removed from Horatio Bottomley's is the Parliamentary seat of Lord Robert Cecil, but in political thought thousands of miles separate them.

It is one of the curious freaks of life that Cecil should be regarded as the great hope of the present democratic movement in England. His is a wonderful mind. His sense of justice is keen edged. Sometimes he seems almost fanatical in his desire to be fair. Not only does he see and hear those of his opponents. His regard for others is so large he weakens his own case. Fiery in his zeal for the success of some ideal, such, for instance, as the growth of the League of Nations, he will listen patiently to his critics and then calmly restart his work of conversion.

Lord Robert is not a great politician; he is in the forefront of the statesmen. His political destiny will show whether a man can be politically honest and still become the leader of England. The question is whether a statesman can command the political support of his country-

men without making political bargains compromising his political ideals.

With things as they are in England to-day Lord Robert is dissatisfied. He may revolt from the party which has been the political faith of his family for generations or he may attempt to revolutionize that party.

There is no better friend of America in England than "Bobby" Cecil, as his intimates know him. He is just over fifty years, young as statesmen go in Britain. He might have been the present British representative in Washington had there not been domestic difficulties in the way of a trivial nature, but important when the social nature of the post is considered. Lord Robert is a man of peace, not a pacifist. He is an idealist, not a visionary. He is an independent, but not by preference. He stands for a policy, not one of political opportunism.

Lord Robert's great interest is in foreign affairs. As representative of South Africa at the Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva he

threw himself into the work with a passionate ardor that swept most of the delegates along with him. He knows every detail of the covenant; he knows exactly the attitude of all the great statesmen of the world; he knows the practical side of international affairs; he knows all the difficulties confronting the league.

And still to-day he is more of an enthusiast than ever. Nobody considers Lord Robert a crank or a fanatic.

Mr. Wilson and Lord Robert are good friends. They understand each other. Had Lord Robert been in Mr. Wilson's place he must have adopted different tactics in his handling of the Senate. For proof of this one has only to recall his attitude in Parliament when meeting the challenges of his critics. He knows the art of give and take, retreat and counter attack. Lord Robert is never completely bowled over. Neither does he retreat to the point where he must abandon his policy. He will do much for Anglo-American relations.

Fortunately there was coffee,